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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

TITLE: BATHTUB PROTECTION AND WORK
 PLATFORM DEVICE

INVENTOR: RALPH GRAHAM

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2 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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4 1. Field of The Invention

5 The present invention relates to work place tables,
6 scaffolds, and temporary working surfaces in construction
7 contexts.

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9 2. Background Information

10 A frequent source of economic loss for home builders and
11 remodelers has to do with damage to bathtubs. Whether it is
12 because bathtubs are installed early in a new home
13 construction project, or that they are already present during
14 remodeling activities, bathtubs are frequently damaged by
15 falling tools and building materials, or by workers standing
16 on the bathtub surfaces with rock or grit-laden work boots.

17 Protective plastic wrapping as comes with many new
18 bathtubs provides little, if any, practical protection against
19 these hazards.

20 The present invention, as will be described below,
21 provides protection against damage to bathtubs during
22 construction and remodeling. An additional need met by the
23 present invention relates to difficulty in working around and
24 over bathtubs during construction and remodeling. While a
25 worker would normally place a ladder on a floor, respectively,

1 next to, or immediately under, a wall or ceiling which is
2 being resurfaced, painted, papered, etc., one may not
3 practically due this when the wall or ceiling is next to or
4 over a bathtub. Some do this, however, often with the type of
5 damage to the bathtub surface described above.

6 In view of the above, it would be highly beneficial to
7 those in the new home construction and remodeling industries
8 to provide some system or structure which could both protect
9 bathtubs against damage during construction or remodeling and,
10 at the same time, provide a usable work surface or scaffold
11 for use when working on surfaces near the bathtub. Ideally,
12 such a system or structure it would be easily assembled, not
13 require any actual, mechanical interface with the bathtub
14 beyond merely sitting thereupon, and would be very economical.

15 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

16 In view of the above, it is an object of the present
17 invention to provide a bathtub protection system.

18 It is another object of the present invention to provide
19 a bathtub protection system which does not require direct,
20 mechanical attachment to the bathtub in order to protect it.

21 It is another object of the present invention to provide
22 a bathtub protection system which, during use, serves, not
23 only to protect the bathtub against damage from falling
24

1 articles, but provides a temporary work surface and work
2 scaffold.

3 It is another object of the present invention to provide
4 a combination bathtub protection system and temporary scaffold
5 which is inexpensive to construct and/or to purchase.

6 In satisfaction of these and related objects, the present
7 invention provides a combination bathtub protection and
8 temporary scaffold system. The system includes a shield and
9 work surface panel to which is attached at least two
10 adjustable positioning units for maintaining the system in the
11 correct position vis-a-vis the bathtub.

12 When properly installed, the present system completely
13 protects the interior and upper margins of a bathtub (those
14 areas most prone to damage during construction or remodeling)
15 and, at the same time, provides a temporary scaffold for use
16 during work on nearby walls and ceilings. The present system
17 is extremely inexpensive to construct in any event, but
18 particularly so when purchased, in part, as a kit whereby the
19 purchaser purchases adjustable positioning units and provides
20 his or her own plywood to serve as the shield and work surface
21 panel.

22 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

23 Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the system of the present
24 invention shown in use with a typical bathtub, with a cutaway
25

1 showing a positioning unit in position for maintaining the
2 shield and temporary work surface panel in position relative
3 to the tub and the nearby wall.

4 Fig. 2 is a perspective view of an adjustable positioning
5 unit of the subject system.

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7 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

8 Referring to figure 1, the combination bathtub protection
9 and temporary scaffold system of the present invention is
10 identified generally by the reference number 10.

11 System 10 includes a shield and work surface panel 12.
12 For purposes of economy, shield and work surface panel 12 is
13 normally expected to consist simply of a suitably sized piece
14 of plywood. Of course, if one desires, one can be as
15 elaborate as one pleases, such as by using metal panels
16 (optionally foldable for portability), wood panels with
17 supporting frames, or even fiberglass sheets of sufficient
18 strength, if the temporary scaffold aspect of the system is to
19 be utilized.

20 Referring principally to Fig. 2, attached to shield and
21 work surface panel 12, for most installations, are two
22 adjustable positioning units 14. Each positioning units 14
23 includes a bracket 16 and an adjustable foot member 18.
24 Bracket 16 includes holes 17 for use in mounting postitioning

1 unit 14 to panel 12 using nuts and bolts (not shown in the
2 drawings).

3 Adjustable foot member 18 includes a threaded rod 20
4 which is threadingly engaged with bracket 16, whereby rotating
5 adjustable foot member 18 about the axis of threaded rod 20
6 extends or retracts foot pad 22 relative to bracket 18.
7 Preferably, the distal surfaces of foot pad 22 will have a
8 nonabrasive surface, such as by adhering fabric or carpet
9 there to.

10 When a system 10 of the present invention is to be
11 assembled, one attaches at least two positioning units 14 to
12 shield and work surface panel 12. Positioning units 14 should
13 be placed such that, with minor adjustment, foot pads 22 can
14 be adjusted such that they press against the interior of a
15 bathtub with which system 10 this to be used such that an edge
16 of shield and work surface panel 12 is press against the wall
17 which juxtaposes the opposite side of the bathtub, thereby
18 securing system 10 relative to the bathtub. Clearly, with one
19 edge of shield and work surface panel 12 juxtaposing a wall on
20 one side of the bathtub, and positioning units 14 pressing
21 against the interior of the bathtub on the side of the bathtub
22 opposite the wall, system 10 will provide a stable surface
23 over the entirety of the bathtub which both protects the tub
24 from damage, and provides a safe surface upon which a worker
25 may stand during work on nearby walls or ceilings. Obviously,

1 the material chosen for shield and work surface panel 12
2 should be of sufficient strength to exceed that needed to
3 support a worker during use (at least 1/2 inch quality plywood
4 being the minimum recommended for a worker of average weight).

5 The modest purchase price for the components needed to
6 construct system 10 will be offset multiple times through the
7 prevention of even one bathtub damage incident during
8 construction or remodeling. Therefore, while quite simple,
9 the present system is believed to provide a substantial
10 benefit to those working in the relevant industry.

11 Although the invention has been described with reference
12 to specific embodiments, this description is not meant to be
13 construed in a limited sense. Various modifications of the
14 disclosed embodiments, as well as alternative embodiments of
15 the inventions will become apparent to persons skilled in the
16 art upon the reference to the description of the invention.
17 It is, therefore, contemplated that the appended claims will
18 cover such modifications that fall within the scope of the
19 invention.
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